Mississippi Delta Co-op 1936

NEWS CLIPPING:

Delta State University

The Delta and Providence Farms: A Mississippi Experiment in Cooperative Farming and Racial Cooperation, 1936-1956

In March 1936, Sherwood Eddy, a well-known Christian crusader and former YMCA leader, purchased 2,138 acres of land near Hillhouse in Bolivar County, Mississippi. Here Eddy and his associates launched a venture in collective cooperative farming first known as Sherwood Farm, then as the People's Plantation, and finally as the Delta Cooperative Farm. The site of the Farm was later christened Rochdale in honor of the famous British example of cooperative economic organization. The immediate aim of the project was to provide a refuge for the evicted and harassed sharecroppers of northeast Arkansas who were the victims of official and "vigilante" persecution because of their connection with the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.[1] Its long-range objectives were to create an example of interracial Christian harmony and to demonstrate that a collective cooperative farm was a better system of labor relations than the oppressive landlord-tenant arrangement.[2]

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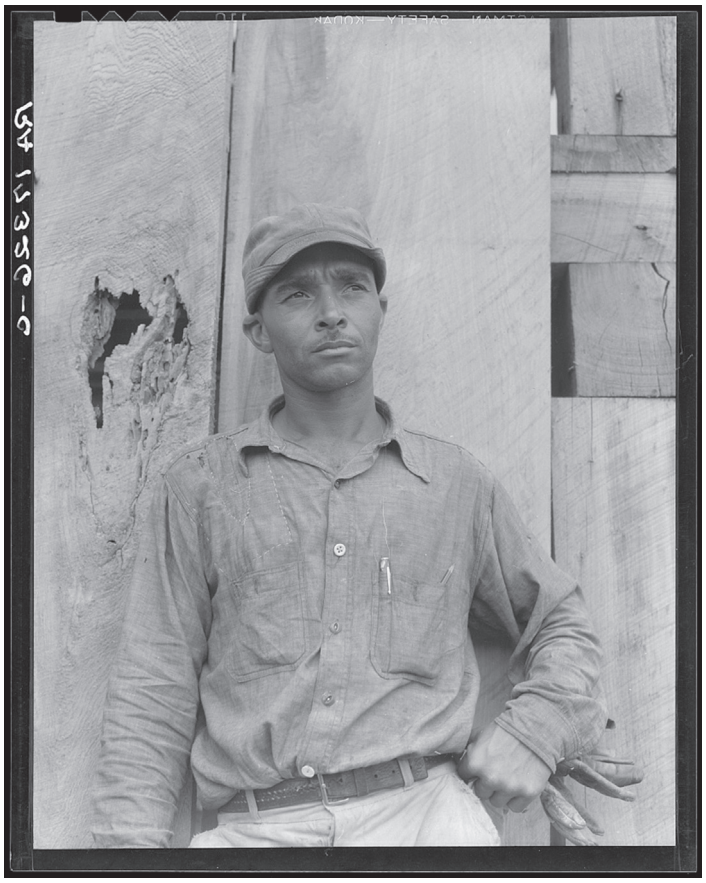
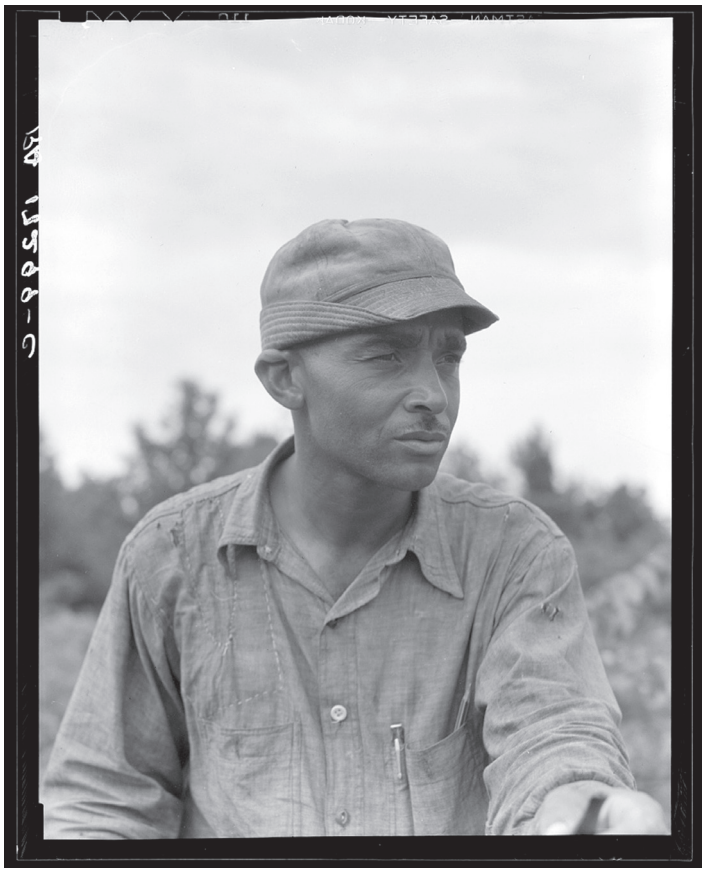
[1] Sherwood Eddy, *A Door of Opportunity or an American Adventure in Cooperation with Sharecroppers* (New York: Association Press, n.d. [1937]), pp. 28-31; Donald H. Grubbs, *Cry From the Cotton: The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union and the New Deal* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1971), pp. 88-93, 120-122; H. L. Mitchell, *Mean Things Happening in This Land: The Life and Times of H. L. Mitchell, Co-Founder of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union* (Montclair, N.J.: Allanheld, Osmun & Co., 1979), pp. 131-132; Anthony Dunbar, *Against the Grain: Southern Radicals and Prophets, 1929-1959* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981), pp. 116-117.

[2] Eddy, pp. 31-33; Sam H. Franklin, "The Delta Cooperative Farm: Hillhouse, Mississippi." Franklin's small pamphlet, written during the first three months of the Farm's history, is located in the Delta Cooperative Farm Collection, Delta State University Archives (abbreviated hereafter as DCF Coll., DSU Arch.), W. B. Roberts Library, Delta State University, Cleveland, Mississippi.

https://www.jstor.org/stable/26475172

The photos are taken by the famed Photographer Dorathea Lang, commissioned by the Federal Government
The photo archives are avialable for public use on the government archival website: **https://www.loc.gov**





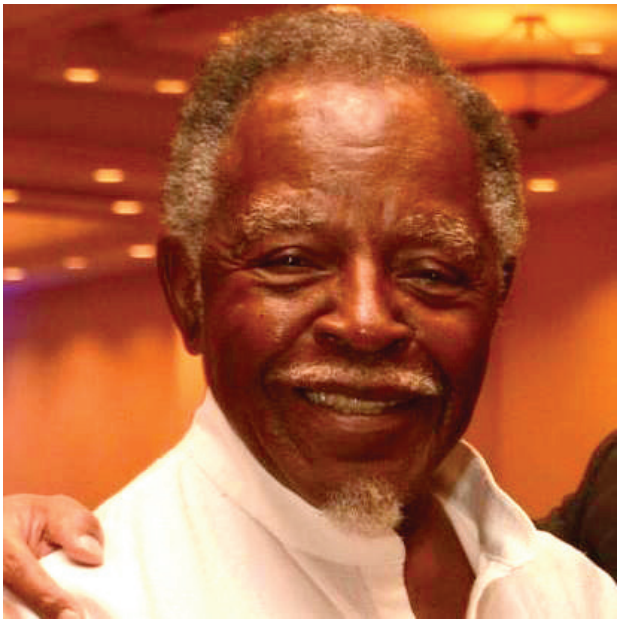
George Houston Smith Sr. 1937
Carpenter at Hillhouse Cooperative

L to R: Annetta and George Jr.

Baby Macintosh W. Smith

Residential Cottages and Storage Shelters built under the direction of George Smith at the Cooperative

ARTICLE: http://tiny.cc/Death_of_a_vision



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